

Original Article

Developing Sustainable University-Community Partnerships: A Needs Assessment of Community Organizations and Alignment to Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

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Abstract. This study addressed the need for an evidence-based and participatory foundation to strengthen university-community partnerships in Bokod, Benguet, particularly for Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)-guided collaboration between Benguet State University-Bokod (BSU-Bokod) and local organizations. The study considered possible partnerships in relation to the university's Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives (VMGO), core values, and graduate attributes. Specifically, it aimed to (1) identify community organizations in Bokod that are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and recognized by the Sangguniang Bayan, (2) determine and prioritize their needs, challenges, and areas requiring support, and (3) identify priority areas for collaboration through BSU-Bokod's instruction, research, extension, and production functions. The study employed a descriptive needs assessment design using a qualitative-descriptive approach supported by documentary profiling. Data were gathered through documentary analysis of accredited organizations, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and validation with selected university administrators. Findings identified 27 officially recognized community organizations in Bokod and revealed four major thematic priority areas: livelihood and economic enhancement, cultural stewardship and community identity, governance and organizational strengthening, and well-being, discipline, and family support mechanisms. The results also showed that registered organizations were generally ready for structured collaboration, while unregistered groups and the emerging parents' association needed support in formal organization, leadership development, and registration processes. The study concludes that a participatory needs assessment provides a strong basis for responsive, inclusive, and sustainable university-community partnerships and offers practical guidance for designing MOA-guided, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-aligned, and values-based programs in BSU-Bokod.

Keywords: *Alignment; Community organizations; Needs assessment; Sustainable university-community partnerships; Vision-Mision-Goals-Objectives.*

University–community partnerships have become an important dimension of higher education because universities are increasingly expected not only to generate knowledge but also to respond meaningfully to the social, economic, cultural, and developmental concerns of the communities they serve. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that these partnerships are strongest when they move beyond one-directional outreach and instead become reciprocal, collaborative, and sustainable engagements in which community stakeholders participate in identifying needs, shaping priorities, and co-creating solutions. This view is consistent with scholarship on community engagement and the broader literature on transformative and socially responsive higher education.

Within this perspective, a community-based needs assessment is a necessary starting point for effective partnership building. Needs assessment does not merely identify deficiencies. It also clarifies local conditions, organizational capacities, existing assets, and priority areas where institutional support may be most relevant. Earlier participatory frameworks underscored the importance of citizen participation and collaborative assessment in strengthening shared decision-making and trust, while more recent studies affirm that systematic, participatory assessment helps institutions and communities design interventions that are more context-sensitive, legitimate, and sustainable.

For BSU–Bokod, this preparatory work is especially important because the campus is not simply expected to conduct outreach activities, but to build partnerships that are purposeful, evidence-based, and aligned with the university’s institutional commitments. Benguet State University’s vision, mission, goals, and objectives, together with its core values and graduate attributes, require engagement that is inclusive, community-responsive, and development-oriented. In this sense, university–community partnership is not only an extension function; it is also a practical setting where institutional values are translated into concrete collaboration with local organizations. The relevance of this alignment is reinforced by Makie and Buado (2025), who found that stronger dissemination of the university VMGO is associated with higher stakeholder awareness, suggesting that effective communication of institutional direction can support stronger participation and coherence in university programs.

The study is likewise significant in relation to broader development and policy frameworks. University–community engagement is increasingly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 11 on sustainable communities, SDG 16 on strong institutions, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. International literature further affirms that universities can contribute to local resilience, inclusive governance, and sustainable development when their engagements are grounded in long-term collaboration with communities and local organizations. At the same time, current scholarship also shows that partnership sustainability depends not only on goodwill but also on governance structures, role clarity, formal mechanisms, and the institutional readiness of community partners.

In the Philippine context, the mandate for state universities and colleges to undertake extension and community-oriented engagement is supported by national legal and constitutional frameworks. Republic Act No. 8292 provides the governance framework for chartered state universities and colleges, Republic Act No. 8435 reinforces the developmental role of higher education in agriculture and fisheries modernization, and the 1987 Constitution affirms the role of educational institutions in national development. These mandates are not merely symbolic. They require institutions such as BSU–Bokod to establish partnerships that are legally grounded, socially responsive, and consistent with actual community conditions.

Despite the growing literature on university–community engagement, an important gap remains in the localized study of partnership preparation in rural Philippine contexts. Much of the literature explains the value of reciprocity, participatory governance, and formalized partnership structures in broad terms, yet fewer studies closely examine the groundwork required before formal collaboration is institutionalized. In particular, there remains limited localized evidence on which organizations are formally registered and recognized, what their pressing needs and challenges are, how ready they are for structured collaboration, and how their prospective responsibilities may be aligned with university priorities before the MOA-guided partnership begins. This gap matters because without such evidence, partnership initiatives may become generic, weakly targeted, or insufficiently aligned with the actual organizational conditions of community stakeholders.

It is within this context that the present study is situated. The study seeks to develop a profile of local organizations

in Bokod, identify those formally registered and recognized, determine their priority needs and challenges, and examine how their potential responsibilities may align with the BSU VMGO, core values, and graduate attributes. In doing so, it provides an evidence-based basis for designing responsive initiatives in instruction, research, extension, and production services, while also contributing to more inclusive, sustainable, and context-sensitive university–community partnerships.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive needs assessment design using a qualitative-descriptive approach supported by documentary profiling. The documentary component focused on identifying and describing the officially recognized community organizations in Bokod, Benguet, particularly those registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and accredited by the Sangguniang Bayan (SB). The qualitative component generated contextual and experiential data through focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and validation inputs from selected university officials. This design was appropriate because the study aimed to: (1) identify existing community organizations that may serve as university partners, (2) determine their needs, challenges, and priority concerns, and (3) align these findings with BSU–Bokod’s functions in instruction, research, extension, and production, including its Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives (VMGO), core values, and graduate attributes. By combining documentary review and participatory qualitative inquiry, the study captured both the formal organizational landscape and stakeholders’ lived concerns, priorities, and readiness for partnership.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Bokod, Benguet, where the identified community organizations are situated and where many parents of BSU–Bokod students reside. Bokod served as the principal community setting for examining organizational conditions, local needs, and possible areas for collaboration. The BSU–Bokod Campus functioned as the coordinating site for communication, participant mobilization, data gathering, and validation of findings with university personnel. The locale was appropriate because the study focused on strengthening community-based partnerships within the campus’s service area.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved participants from four data-source groups:

- (1) SEC-registered and SB-accredited community organizations in Bokod for documentary profiling;
- (2) selected registered and unregistered community organizations that participated in the FGDs and KIIs;
- (3) parents of BSU–Bokod students, considered emerging stakeholders and possible future partners; and
- (4) selected university officials who provided validation and institutional perspectives on the findings.

For the documentary phase, complete enumeration was used because all twenty-seven (27) officially accredited organizations listed by the Sangguniang Bayan were included in the organizational profile. For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was employed to select participants who could provide relevant information regarding community needs, organizational challenges, and partnership opportunities. Actual participants included representatives from the Association of Brave and Resilient OFWs Amidst Diversity (ABROAD), the Adibayan Mothers Association (AMA), the Kabayan OFW Association, and the Bokod–Kabayan Tourist Transport Association (BBKTA), as well as twenty-three (23) parents of BSU–Bokod students. Validation inputs were also obtained from the Campus Administrator, the Head of the Office of Student Affairs, and the former Campus Administrator/Dean of the College of Education. The inclusion criteria covered organizational leaders, officers, or authorized representatives of community groups in Bokod; parents of currently enrolled BSU–Bokod students; and university officials with direct knowledge of student welfare, extension, and community engagement. Individuals not directly connected to the identified organizations or unavailable during the data collection period were excluded.

Research Instruments

The Organizational Profiling Form was used to record documentary data on the accredited organizations, including their names, accreditation dates, addresses, and other organizational details reflected in the official list. The FGD Guide and KII Guide were used to gather data on community-defined needs, organizational challenges, readiness for partnership, and suggested areas for BSU–Bokod support. The Validation and Alignment Matrix

was used after the preliminary analysis to organize the identified needs according to BSU–Bokod’s mandated functions in instruction, research, extension, and production, and to examine their correspondence with the university’s VMGO, core values, and graduate attributes. Faculty members reviewed all instruments to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency with the study’s objectives. Since the instruments were primarily documentary and qualitative, statistical reliability testing was not applicable. Instead, trustworthiness was supported through content validation, triangulation, and validation of emerging findings by key university informants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering began with securing the official list of accredited community organizations from the Office of the Sangguniang Bayan of Bokod. These records formed the basis of the documentary profile of recognized community organizations in the municipality. After the necessary coordination and permissions were secured, letters of invitation were prepared and distributed by selected BSU–Bokod students to invite parents and prospective community participants. The qualitative phase consisted of FGDs and KIIs with available community representatives and parents. Face-to-face discussions were conducted with participants who were available onsite, while one KII with the president of the Bokod–Kabayan Tourist Transport Association was conducted via Facebook Messenger call due to an unforeseen circumstance that prevented in-person participation. Data from the discussions and interview were recorded through detailed note-taking and organized immediately after each session. After the preliminary consolidation of responses, the emerging themes, needs, and possible partnership areas were presented to selected university officials for validation, comments, and refinement. This sequence ensured that the findings moved systematically from organizational profiling to identified needs and then to institutional alignment and collaboration planning.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, documentary data from the Sangguniang Bayan were analyzed through descriptive profiling to identify the accredited organizations in Bokod, Benguet, including their names, accreditation dates, and locations. This phase supported the organizational mapping presented in the study. In the second phase, qualitative data from the FGDs, KIIs, and validation inputs were analyzed using thematic analysis. Notes were reviewed, coded, grouped, and synthesized according to recurring needs, challenges, and concerns raised by each organization or stakeholder group. Responses were organized by association or participant category to make similarities and differences more visible. From this process, the major thematic areas were identified, such as livelihood and economic enhancement, cultural stewardship and community identity, governance and organizational strengthening, and well-being, discipline, and family support mechanisms. In the third phase, the validated needs and challenges underwent prioritization and alignment analysis. A simple matrix was used to rank the identified concerns according to urgency, relevance, and feasibility for BSU–Bokod intervention. The prioritized areas were then mapped to the university’s mandated functions in instruction, research, extension, and production, and further aligned with the VMGO, core values, and graduate attributes of BSU. This analytic step was necessary because the findings not only identified needs but also translated them into possible areas for university–community collaboration and the corresponding responsibilities of both the organizations and BSU–Bokod.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted as part of an approved university extension activity. Before the FGDs, KIIs, and validation activities, the participants were verbally informed of the study’s purpose, their role, and how the information would be used. Those who agreed to join signified their consent through an affirmative verbal response. Participation was voluntary, and participants were free to decline to answer questions or stop participating at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was also observed by reporting the findings in grouped or thematic form and by using the gathered information only for the purposes of the study.

Results and Discussion

Accredited Community Organizations in Bokod

Table 1 presents the twenty-seven (27) community organizations in Bokod, Benguet that are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and accredited by the Sangguniang Bayan. The organizations represent diverse sectors, including farmers’ associations, multipurpose cooperatives, women’s groups, indigenous peoples’ organizations, transport associations, OFW organizations, and livelihood-oriented community groups. Most of these organizations were accredited between August and September 2025, indicating

an active effort by the local government to formally recognize grassroots organizations and strengthen their participation in local governance and development. This result suggests that Bokod has an emerging, institutionally supported civil society landscape conducive to university–community engagement. The formal recognition of these organizations increases their readiness for structured and legally grounded collaboration with BSU–Bokod through Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), shared programs, and capacity-building initiatives. This finding supports the view that recognized community organizations are better positioned for accountability, partnership, and sustained participation in local development processes (Visco, 2021; Matelski, 2025).

Table 1. Accreditation Date, Accredited Community Organizations, and Address

Accreditation Date	Accredited CSOs	Address
22-Aug-25	Poblacion Bokod Greenfields Association	Poblacion
22-Aug-25	Bokod Sulphur Spring Multipurpose Cooperative	Poblacion
22-Aug-25	Wakal Community Organization	Wakal, Nawal
22-Aug-25	Bawemapeta Integrated Farmers Association	Bawemapeta, Nawal
22-Aug-25	Senior Citizen Association Wakal Chapter	Wakal, Nawal
22-Aug-25	Residents Development Multipurpose Cooperative	Pil-piloy, Pito
22-Aug-25	Debonow Organic Practitioners and Irrigators Association	Wakal, Nawal
26-Aug-25	Karao-Ekip Tribal Regreening Movement Inc.	Ekip
26-Aug-25	Wakal Organic Farmers Association	Wakal, Nawal
26-Aug-25	Gawigawaldik Ikaroo Diversified Farmers Association	Karao
26-Aug-25	Adibayan Mothers Organization	Bila
26-Aug-25	Bokod Association of PWD (BAPD)	Poblacion
26-Aug-25	Association of Brave & Resilient OFWs Amidst Diversity (ABROAD)	Poblacion
26-Aug-25	Bokod-Kabayan Tourist Transport Association, Inc.	Logdeck, Ambangeg
26-Aug-25	Ambuklao Coffee Growers Association	Bangao, Ambuklao
26-Aug-25	Penged Community Store Organization	Penged, Daklan
26-Aug-25	Bangao Women’s Rural Improvement Club	Bangao, Ambuklao
26-Aug-25	Penged Women’s Rural Improvement Club	Penged, Daklan
26-Aug-25	Bobok-Bisal Farmers and Neighborhood Association	Kawal, Bobok-Bisal
26-Aug-25	Karao Tribe Multipurpose Cooperative	Karao
26-Aug-25	Ambayec-Acnip Farmers/Irrigators Association	Ambayec, Poblacion
26-Aug-25	Igorota Foundation Inc.	57A Crystal Cave, Bakakeng
26-Aug-25	Shakilan ni Ikulos – Indigenous People Organization	Peday, Poblacion
26-Aug-25	Ekip-Karao Farmers and Irrigators Association	Pethel, Ekip
26-Aug-25	VFP Sons and Daughters Association Inc. (VFP-SDAI)	Poblacion
26-Aug-25	Bokod Transport Cooperative	Bila
03-Sep-25	Palenged Integrated Farmers Association	Poblacion
	Total	27

The diversity of accredited organizations further shows that community needs in Bokod are varied and place-based. The presence of agriculture-related groups, women’s associations, transport cooperatives, indigenous peoples’ organizations, and OFW-centered groups indicates that the municipality’s development concerns span livelihood, mobility, culture, governance, tourism, and psychosocial well-being. For BSU–Bokod, this means that community engagement cannot rely on a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, interventions must be co-designed according to the specific social, economic, and cultural realities of each organization and barangay. This finding is consistent with recent literature on university–community partnerships, which emphasizes reciprocity, shared power, co-creation, and long-term mutual benefit as key conditions for meaningful and sustainable engagement (Anderson et al., 2025; Isokuortti et al., 2024; Málovics et al., 2025). The distribution of organizations across Poblacion, Wakal, Karao, Ambuklao, Daklan, and other areas also highlights the importance of recognizing local knowledge systems and community-specific conditions in designing extension and research programs.

Another important result is that three of the organizations that participated in the focus group discussions (FGDs)—the Association of Brave and Resilient OFWs Amidst Diversity (ABROAD), the Adibayan Mothers Association (AMA), and the Bokod-Kabayan Tourist Transport Association (BBKTA)—are already formally recognized and therefore capable of entering into structured university partnerships. In contrast, the Kabayan OFW Association and the emerging BSU–Bokod Parents and Landlords Association do not yet appear to have formal registration. This distinction is significant because it reveals that BSU–Bokod’s potential partners include both established organizations and promising but informal groups that still need organizational strengthening. The result implies that community engagement in Bokod should include not only program delivery but also community organizing, legal formation, leadership development, and institutional mentoring for emerging

organizations. Such an approach is supported by studies showing that unregistered groups often face barriers to formal partnership, funding access, and participatory governance, but can become strong collaborators once their structures are developed (Matelski, 2025; Visco, 2021).

Community-Defined Needs, Challenges, and Areas for BSU–Bokod Support

Table 2. *Organizational Descriptions, Needs, Challenges, and Areas for BSU–Bokod Services*

Organization Descriptions	Needs (Classified & Prioritized; with SDG Numbers)	Challenges Identified	Areas for BSU–Bokod Services
Registered Organization: Adibayan Mothers Association (AMA) Women’s group focusing on local food processing, cultural knowledge, and livelihood.	• Product enhancement, food safety, labeling & packaging (SDG 8; SDG 12) • Cultural knowledge documentation (SDG 11.4) • Skills upgrading for livelihood sustainability (SDG 1; SDG 5) • Parenting, wellness, and leadership training (SDG 3; SDG 4.7)	• Limited equipment and water supply • Seasonal production and low market access • Need for standardization & quality improvement • Emotional strain and limited support systems	• Strong cultural stewardship but limited livelihood stability • Mothers balancing home, livelihood & community roles • Broken relationships among groups / low volunteerism • Psychosocial stress and discipline concerns impacting productivity
Registered Organization: Association of Brave & Resilient OFWs Amidst Diversity (ABROAD) OFW-centered association sharing resiliency practices, local food products & community experiences. Registered Organization: Bokod–Kabayan Tourist Transport Association (BBKTA) Transport group supporting tourism mobility and community transport services.	• Value-adding of food products (SDG 8) • IEC materials for translation & herbal research (SDG 3; SDG 11.4) • ICT literacy (SDG 9) • Behavioral, leadership & values formation (SDG 4.7) • Transport safety training (SDG 3.6) • assist in managing and improving their display center for Cordilleran-made handicraft, artifacts, other forms of visual arts, cultural attire, instruments and souvenir items • Customer service and values formation (SDG 4.7) • Enterprise development and digital promotion (SDG 8; SDG 9) • Solid waste management practices (SDG 11; SDG 12) • Support in <i>organizational formation & SEC registration</i> (SDG 16)	• Communication gaps and fallacious/emotional arguments • OFW family challenges (parenting, discipline, mental health) • Limited digital skills for product marketing • High transport rates & poor road conditions • Traffic management issues; vehicle maintenance gaps • Limited financial and administrative planning skills	• Recurring family–youth discipline concerns • Apathy, low volunteerism, and uncooperative behaviors • Misinformation and reactive decision-making patterns • Law violations & accident risks • Apathy toward compliance with policies and safety protocols • Uncooperative behaviors affecting community expectations
Unregistered Organization: Kabayan OFW Association A small informal OFW-based group represented by a business owner in Ambangeg, Daklan; not yet SEC-registered or SB-accredited.	• Training in <i>leadership, governance & documentation</i> (SDG 4.7; SDG 17) • Skills development in <i>financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and digital marketing</i> (SDG 8) • Psycho-social wellness & OFW family support (SDG 3)	• Lack of legal identity • Unstable membership/ participation • Limited understanding of documentation requirements • No access to MOA-based partnerships • Communication gaps	• Need for <i>capacity-building</i> for emerging groups • Misinformation, emotional reasoning & inconsistent participation • OFW family pressures and lack of psychosocial support • Readiness but low structural capacity
Unregistered Organization: Parents (Emerging: BSU–Bokod Parents & Landlords Association) Unorganized but highly relevant parent group representing multiple degree programs and student welfare concerns.	• Mental health support (SDG 3) • Parenting education & family communication (SDG 4.7) • Affordable transport & safe boarding houses (SDG 11) • Water supply & hygiene in campus and boarding facilities (SDG 6) • Discipline, uniform compliance & student conduct guidance (SDG 16)	• Limited information dissemination • Misinformation & poor coordination • High transport costs; unsafe housing • Apathy & low parent engagement	• Recurring themes: discipline issues, suicidal tendencies, law violations, uncooperativeness • Unique concerns: landlord–parent tensions, water scarcity, safety gaps

Table 2 shows that the participating organizations identified distinct but interconnected needs that may be

grouped into livelihood and economic enhancement, cultural preservation, governance and organizational development, and psychosocial and family support. The Adibayan Mothers Association (AMA), for example, prioritized product enhancement, food safety, labeling and packaging, cultural knowledge documentation, livelihood skills upgrading, and parenting and wellness training. These results indicate that AMA functions not only as a livelihood group but also as a cultural and social support organization. However, its members face structural barriers such as limited equipment, seasonal production, poor market access, and inadequate water supply, alongside emotional strain and weak volunteer participation. These conditions suggest that BSU-Bokod's support should go beyond technical training and include psychosocial, organizational, and values-based interventions. The result reflects broader literature showing that women-led community organizations frequently combine livelihood roles with caregiving, cultural stewardship, and social cohesion, requiring integrated and context-sensitive support systems.

Similarly, ABROAD identified needs related to value-adding of local food products, ICT literacy, translation and herbal research, and leadership and values formation. These findings show that the intersection of migration experience, community livelihood, and family well-being shapes the organization's concerns. The challenges they reported—communication gaps, emotionally driven decision-making, limited digital skills, and OFW-related family pressures—indicate that their development needs are not purely economic but also psychosocial and relational. This implies that BSU-Bokod may play an important role in helping OFW-centered groups strengthen both their entrepreneurial capacity and their internal communication, leadership, and family support mechanisms. The result supports participatory engagement literature showing that effective community-based initiatives are stronger when priorities are generated with communities, when local actors are involved in defining needs, and when interventions are built around community ownership rather than externally imposed programming (Ahari et al., 2012; Eldeeb et al., 2025; Kearney et al., 2013).

The Bokod-Kabayan Tourist Transport Association (BBKTA), on the other hand, highlighted needs related to transport safety, customer service, digital promotion, enterprise development, environmental practices, and support for its display center for Cordilleran-made handicrafts, artifacts, instruments, attire, and souvenir items. These findings reflect the group's dual role in both mobility services and local tourism promotion. Their identified challenges—poor road conditions, maintenance gaps, law violations, inconsistent safety compliance, and weak administrative planning—suggest that transport development in the area is closely tied to governance, values formation, and public safety. This result indicates that BSU-Bokod can contribute not only through technical or entrepreneurial training but also through values education, policy orientation, and community-based tourism research. The need to improve the display center further shows that cultural preservation and enterprise development are closely linked in the local context.

The findings also reveal that the unregistered Kabayan OFW Association and the emerging BSU-Bokod Parents and Landlords Association have more foundational needs. The Kabayan OFW Association expressed the need for SEC registration, organizational formation, leadership training, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and psychosocial support. Meanwhile, the parent group identified urgent concerns related to mental health, parenting education, transport affordability, boarding-house safety, water access, hygiene, discipline, and student welfare. These results suggest that informal or emerging groups tend to prioritize legal identity, internal organization, communication systems, and social support mechanisms before they can effectively participate in formal institutional partnerships. The strong parental concern about student discipline, mental health, housing, and safety also indicates that community engagement at BSU-Bokod must include families and landlords as important stakeholders in students' academic and social environment. This finding is consistent with literature showing that organized parent groups and community-based associations strengthen school-community collaboration, student support, and shared responsibility for welfare outcomes (Murray, 2019; Berhanu et al., 2024).

Dominant Thematic Results. Across all FGDs and KIIs, four major themes emerged: (1) livelihood and economic enhancement, (2) cultural stewardship and community identity, (3) governance, leadership, and organizational strengthening, and (4) well-being, discipline, and family support mechanisms. These themes demonstrate that the needs of community partners are multidimensional and require integrated responses from the university.

result strongly supports participatory and community-based frameworks, which argue that sustainable partnerships begin with community-defined needs, shared priority-setting, and co-designed responses rather than institution-driven assumptions (Anderson et al., 2025; Ravaghi et al., 2023; D'Agostino et al., 2025). In this case, the findings provide a clear empirical basis for designing BSU-Bokod interventions that are responsive, reciprocal, and aligned with both local realities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this case, the findings provide a clear empirical basis for designing BSU-Bokod interventions that are responsive, reciprocal, and aligned with both local realities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Priority Areas for University–Community Collaboration Aligned with BSU’s Mandated Functions

Table 3. *Priority Areas for University–Community Collaboration by Organization, Mandated Functions, and BSU–Bokod College Alignment*

Organization	Priority Areas for University–Community Collaboration	Instruction	Research
Registered: Adibayan Mothers Association (AMA) Women’s group focused on food processing, culture, and livelihood	• Food safety, labeling & packaging training • Cultural knowledge documentation • Skills upgrading for livelihood sustainability • Wellness, parenting & leadership formation • SDG Alignment: SDG 8, 11, 12, 3, 4, 7	✓ Integration of AMA local products in TLE, BTVTED, BTLED practicum ✓ COED Social Science faculty modules on culture & values	✓ Research on cassava-based products, cultural practices, recycling innovations ✓ Documentation of herbal translations ✓ Production of standardized and market-ready cassava-based and local food products ✓ Development of culturally branded packaging and labeling materials ✓ Community-based livelihood products (e.g., herbal, recycled crafts) for local markets ✓ Development of digital marketing outputs (e.g., online shops, social media promotions) ✓ Production of value-added local products for wider market reach ✓ Creation of translated IEC materials and wellness guides for OFW families ✓ Development of tourism promotional materials (brochures, digital content) ✓ Production of transport safety manuals and guidelines ✓ Implementation of eco-friendly transport and waste management practices ✓ Enhancement of the BKTTA display center for Cordilleran handicrafts and cultural products, including product development, packaging, labeling, and merchandising systems ✓ Development of organizational manuals, by-laws, and registration documents ✓ Creation of financial literacy toolkits and livelihood starter kits ✓ Production of
Registered: Association of Brave & Resilient OFWs Amidst Diversity (ABROAD) OFW-centered, resiliency and livelihood	• ICT literacy and digital marketing • Value-adding of local food products • Translational projects & herbal research • Behavioral, leadership & values training • SDG Alignment: SDG 8, 3, 9, 4, 7	✓ ICT integration & communication modules ✓ Values formation sessions integrated in COED courses	✓ Herbal plant research, translation studies ✓ Research on OFW family dynamics, mental health
Registered: Bokod-Kabayan Tourist Transport Association (BBKTA) Transport & tourism mobility	• Transport safety & community tourism orientation • Customer care & values formation • Enterprise development & digital promotion • Waste & traffic management practices • SDG Alignment: SDG 3.6, 4.7, 8, 11, 12	✓ Traffic safety modules; customer service education ✓ Tourism & geography instruction support	✓ Transport safety studies; community-based tourism research
Unregistered: Kabayan OFW Association Informal OFW-based group	• SEC registration support & organizational formation • Leadership & governance training • Financial literacy & entrepreneurship • Psychosocial wellness	✓ Governance & leadership modules taught by COED & CCJPA ✓ Parenting & family communication modules	✓ Research on readiness of emerging groups; OFW family psychosocial issues

& family communication • SDG Alignment: SDG 16, 4.7, 17, 8, 3	psychosocial support materials (guides, modules, IECs)
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Table 3 maps the identified organizational needs to BSU-Bokod's functions in instruction, research, extension, and production, as well as to the relevant colleges and faculty groups. The results show that registered organizations such as AMA, ABROAD, and BBKTA tend to articulate more developed operational and programmatic needs, including product improvement, transport safety, digital promotion, values formation, and cultural documentation. In contrast, unregistered or emerging groups such as the Kabayan OFW Association and the BSU-Bokod Parents and Landlords Association still require support in organizational formation, governance, legal recognition, and psychosocial readiness. This distinction indicates that collaboration readiness varies across organizations and that BSU-Bokod must adopt differentiated partnership strategies based on each group's level of institutional maturity. This finding aligns with studies showing that organizational capacity, governance experience, and internal structure significantly influence the success of community partnerships (Mayberry et al., 2008; DeCorby-Watson et al., 2018).

The results further show that BSU-Bokod's colleges are well positioned to respond to these needs through discipline-based collaboration. The College of Education (CED) can contribute through values education, parenting modules, cultural learning, and psychosocial support; the College of Criminal Justice and Public Administration (CCJPA) can address governance, safety, legal compliance, and documentation; and the College of Applied Technology (CAT) can assist in entrepreneurship, ICT, digital promotion, product enhancement, and applied innovations. This mapping demonstrates that the university's academic structure can be directly linked to community realities in ways that enrich both student learning and community development. The finding supports literature emphasizing that effective university-community engagement requires intentional institutional mechanisms that connect curricular functions with community-defined priorities (Drahota et al., 2016; Isokuortti et al., 2024).

The research dimension of Table 3 also highlights strong opportunities for collaborative knowledge production. Proposed topics such as cassava-based product development, herbal translation, OFW family dynamics, transport safety, student welfare, boarding-house conditions, and water and hygiene concerns show that faculty and students can engage in research that is locally grounded and socially relevant. This result suggests that the community is not merely a recipient of services but a co-producer of knowledge, data, and innovation. Such a role is central to community-based participatory research and participatory action approaches, which emphasize shared inquiry, local knowledge, and co-designed problem-solving (Atkins et al., 2018; Kearney, 2013; Nelson et al., 2025).

The findings likewise demonstrate close alignment between the identified collaboration priorities and BSU's VMGO, core values, and graduate attributes. Needs related to governance, discipline, and compliance reflect Integrity and Service; psychosocial resilience and adaptation among OFW groups reflect Resilience; product improvement, ICT literacy, and digital promotion reflect Innovation; cultural preservation and environmental practices reflect Stewardship; and quality improvement, safety training, and professionalization reflect Excellence. These priorities also provide authentic contexts for developing graduate attributes such as Transformative Leader, Resilient Professional, Innovative Researcher, Cultural Steward, and Service-Oriented Collaborator.

Thus, Table 3 shows that BSU-Bokod is institutionally capable of implementing MOA-guided, SDG-aligned university-community partnerships that are responsive to both community-defined needs and academic mandates. By linking local priorities with instruction, research, extension, and production, the university is positioned to operationalize a values-engaged and evidence-based model of collaboration. This result affirms recent scholarship showing that sustainable university partnerships are strongest when they are co-designed, mutually beneficial, grounded in shared responsibility, and supported by continuing institutional commitment and power-sharing practices (Anderson et al., 2025; Drahota et al., 2016; Leal Filho et al., 2023; Málovics et al., 2025).

Proposed Responsibilities for MOA-Guided University-Community Partnerships

The final set of results presents the proposed responsibilities of the partner organizations and of BSU-Bokod in future collaborations. These responsibilities indicate that partnership is understood not as one-sided service

delivery but as a reciprocal and accountable relationship. For registered organizations such as AMA, ABROAD, and BBKTA, the expected responsibilities include active participation in training, provision of local knowledge and products for research and development, support for student immersion and practicum, and compliance with standards related to food safety, transport discipline, professionalism, and community values. For BSU-Bokod, the corresponding responsibilities include technical training, research support, product development, digital marketing assistance, cultural documentation, psychosocial programming, and faculty deployment. These results reflect a mature partnership model in which both the university and the organization contribute actively to program success.

For the Kabayan OFW Association and the emerging BSU-Bokod Parents and Landlords Association, the proposed responsibilities focus more strongly on organizational formation, documentation, communication, leadership, and legal preparation for future partnerships. This result is important because it recognizes that emerging groups cannot yet be expected to function in the same way as established organizations. Instead, they require mentoring and institutional support before they can participate effectively in MOA-based engagements. The findings, therefore, imply that BSU-Bokod's community engagement strategy should include a preparatory phase for informal groups, covering governance training, registration assistance, leadership development, and creation of basic organizational systems. This is consistent with literature showing that community capacity-building is a necessary foundation for equitable and sustainable collaboration (DeCorby-Watson et al., 2018; Visco, 2021).

Taken together, these responsibilities provide a concrete operational framework for future BSU-Bokod partnerships. They clarify expectations, define mutual contributions, and strengthen the basis for transparent and sustainable community engagement. As a result, the study not only identifies community needs and collaboration priorities but also translates them into actionable responsibilities that can guide program design, MOA preparation, monitoring, and evaluation. This demonstrates that the community-based needs assessment generated practical and institutionally relevant outcomes for university-community collaboration.

Conclusion

This study concluded that BSU-Bokod's community engagement can be strengthened by shifting from general outreach to a needs-based and differentiated partnership model grounded in the actual conditions of community organizations in Bokod, Benguet. It identified both accredited and emerging groups, assessed their organizational readiness, and mapped their priority needs and challenges, which were then translated into aligned opportunities for instruction, research, extension, and production consistent with the university's VMGO, core values, graduate attributes, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Findings showed that registered organizations are more prepared for formal collaboration, while emerging and unregistered groups require capacity-building support in governance, documentation, and organizational development prior to full partnership engagement. These results provide a basis for targeted university interventions, policy refinement on partnership readiness and MOA-based engagement, and the integration of community contexts into teaching, research, and extension activities.

Thus, the study established a practical framework for developing responsive and equitable university-community partnerships in Bokod, emphasizing the importance of organizational readiness, co-designed interventions, and sustained collaboration as foundations for future program implementation and impact evaluation.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: Conceptualization, methodology, data gathering, data analysis, supervision, and writing of the original draft.

Author 2: Data gathering, data analysis, and review of the manuscript.

Author 3: Proposal writing, data gathering, and manuscript review.

Author 4: Proposal writing, data gathering, and manuscript review.

Author 5: Proposal writing, data gathering, and manuscript review.

Author 6: Proposal writing, data gathering, and manuscript review.

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Conflict of Interests

There is no conflict of interest.

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